

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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BRIEFING ON EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY, AFFIRMATIVE
EMPLOYMENT, AND SMALL BUSINESS

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THURSDAY,

NOVEMBER 30, 2017

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ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

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The Commission met in the Commissioners= Hearing Room
at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, One White Flint North, 11555
Rockville Pike, at 10:03 a.m., Kristine L. Svinicki, Chairman, presiding.

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

KRISTINE L. SVINICKI, Chairman

JEFF BARAN, Commissioner

STEPHEN G. BURNS, Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT:

ANNETTE VIETTI-COOK, Secretary of the Commission

MARGARET DOANE, General Counsel

NRC STAFF:

PAMELA BAKER, Director, Office of Small Business and
Civil Rights

JENNIFER GOLDBERGER, Deputy Chief Human Capital Officer,
Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer

CATHERINE HANEY, Regional Administrator, Region II

MICHAEL JOHNSON, Deputy Executive Director for
Reactor and Preparedness Programs

JENNENE LITTLEJOHN, Chair, Advisory Committee for
African Americans

MARIA SCHWARTZ, Executive Vice-President of NTEU
Chapter 208

MICHAEL WEBER, Director, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research

MAUREEN WYLIE, Chief Financial Officer, Office of
the Chief Financial Officer

P R O C E E D I N G S

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10:03 a.m.

CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Well, good morning, everyone. It's so great to see everyone here this morning. And we are convening to have our semi-annual briefing on EEO, affirmative employment, and small business-related topics, although we're going to hear, I think, a broader diversity of topics than that today.

We're going to be hearing some more about strategic workforce planning, competency modeling. So I know I eagerly look forward to the presentations and our Q&A, and -- you know, it's interesting. These are semi-annual, so it tends to be towards this time of the year, the end of the year, that we gather for the second of these that we do annually.

And for me, this is a time of year when I focus on kind of, you know, what atmosphere are we creating around ourselves? How are we treating each other? And so I think, in some ways for me personally, it's a great time of year to gather together as an NRC community, and discuss these topics. Before we begin though, do either of my colleagues have any opening remarks?

Okay, well with that we will begin. And, very capably as acting EDO today, we have Mr. Mike Johnson to lead off staff presentation. Please proceed.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Chairman. Good morning, Chairman. Good morning Commissioner Baran and Commissioner Burns.

We do appreciate the opportunity to provide you with an update, or an overview, on the EEO -- Equal Employment Opportunity -- programs. And to highlight our dedication to a diverse and

1 empowered workforce. Can I have slide 2, please?

2 At this morning's meeting, I'm joined by Pam Baker, who is
3 the Director of the Office of Small Business and Civil Rights, who will highlight
4 the Agency's accomplishments in the small business program, and our
5 ongoing work with minority-serving institutions, and our diversity and inclusion
6 programs.

7 Jennifer Golder, who is the Deputy Chief, Human Capital
8 Officer, will discuss two important initiatives. Jennifer will provide an update
9 on our strategic workforce planning, pilot-enhanced strategic workforce
10 planning pilot, and discuss our progress in the development of competency
11 modeling.

12 Cathy Haney, the original Administrator for Region II, will
13 highlight the recent diversity and inclusion accomplishments in Region II.
14 Maureen Wylie, the Chief Financial Officer, will share with you some insights
15 in the successful change within the Office of Chief Financial Officer.

16 And then finally, Ms. Jennene Littlejohn, the Chair of the
17 Advisory Committee for African Americans, will speak on behalf of the
18 Diversity Management Advisory Committee. She'll also share with you a few
19 minutes of a video on the importance of supervisors. That video was
20 prepared, developed through a partnership between the EEO advisory
21 committees.

22 Throughout the presentations, you'll hear how we've been
23 partnering within offices, and across offices and programs, to achieve our
24 safety and security mission, and to sustain our commitment to diversity and
25 inclusion.

1 These partnerships are even more important now in the
2 current environment with declining budgets and limited hiring and promotional
3 opportunities. And so with that, I'll turn it over to Pam to begin our
4 presentation. Pam?

5 MS. BAKER: Thank you, Mike. Good morning Chairman
6 Svinicki, Commissioners Baron and Burns. I'm pleased to provide you an
7 update on the NRC's Equal Employment Opportunity Program today.

8 This past August, the Office of Small Business and Civil
9 Rights -- SBCR -- held a joint EEO conference for our counselors, advisory
10 committee members, and others.

11 In deciding on a theme for that conference, we reflected
12 upon the great strides the NRC has made to-date in designing a
13 work dev- -- diverse workforce, and creating an inclusive work environment.

14 These achievements have laid a foundation upon which we
15 continue to build upon, as SBCR becomes a more efficient and effective office.
16 Thus, today's briefing focuses on the partnering that has occurred across the
17 Agency, that has served to ensure a continuation of what we've accomplished.

18 I'll share how years of past efforts have resulted in
19 excellence for our small business program, and significant success for the
20 minority-serving institution program.

21 Through a sharing of resources with other offices, we
22 maintained 100 percent timeliness in processing EEO complaints, and have
23 again established the NRC as a benchmark for inclusion with our diversity
24 dialogue program. Next slide.

25 The NRC's A+ small business grade for 2016 was the result
26 of a culmination of the program's continued excellence through the years. As

1 SBCR continues our partnership with the Office of Administration, our 2017
2 performance, again, is indicative of how years of effort can ultimately result in
3 great returns.

4 We not only surpassed our overall small business goal of 32
5 percent by achieving 36.7 percent, of significance is the awards to service
6 disabled veteran-owned businesses.

7 We achieved a historical largest-dollar-awarded, with \$15.6
8 million, more than double our three percent goal.

9 A major contract was for the building operations, where,
10 through the years, we assisted potential businesses to increase the market
11 competitiveness for these services.

12 Nonetheless, FY 2018 will be a challenging year, as our
13 marketplace for small business shrinks. In addition to proprietary restrictions
14 and statutory requirements to sustain specific sources, our budget for
15 corporate support goods and services, which provides the majority of small
16 business opportunities, is reduced.

17 The pursuit of shared services is a sound business practice
18 to stretch our funding, but it does limit small business.

19 We continue to focus on where we can develop small
20 business sources in those areas where opportunity does exist, while also
21 maintaining what we've achieved thus far.

22 The small business community ebbs and flows as
23 companies graduate from the 8A program, and HUB zones are redefined.
24 Our extensive community awareness and agility enables us to respond to
25 these changes, to ensure our small business objectives are realized, by
26 placing greater emphasis on market research, and collaborating with our

1 contracting officer representatives, and identifying viable sources. Next slide.

2 SBCR's outreach efforts have also yielded positive results
3 in supporting the NRC's Minority-Serving Institution Program. The technical
4 assistance we have provided to MSIs has enabled many institutions to
5 become more competitive for Integrated University Program grants.

6 In FY 2017, MSI award funding from the IUP was over
7 \$4 million, which is more than double than what had been awarded in previous
8 years.

9 Outreach with our existing MSI grantees also continues.
10 The University of Houston downtown recently provided a presentation of the
11 wide range of programs and curriculums they have developed over the years,
12 to serve NRC and the industry skill needs.

13 We hosted Fort Valley University's stem program, sharing
14 with about 40 high school students the career opportunities available at the
15 NRC, as these young students start thinking about their education endeavors.

16 We continue to close out the specific MSI grants program,
17 and integrate it with the IUP, in alignment with the Project Aim re-baselining
18 recommendation.

19 In FY 2017, we successfully funded the grants for that year
20 by prioritizing and reprogramming funds within the outreach product line, as
21 portrayed in this displayed chart.

22 Over the next four years, we will orderly close out this
23 program for the remaining open grants. Next slide.

24 A year ago I shared concerns regarding SBCR's ability to
25 meet the demands of timely processing EEO complaints, given reduced
26 resources and anticipated increased workload.

1 As SBCR continues to develop internal bench strength to
2 meet this challenge, we explored other options. We successfully partnered
3 with the Office of General Counsel and the Office of Commission Appellate
4 Adjudication, two rotations with our Civil Rights staff.

5 These rotations provided much needed relief in the SBCR
6 office in addressing workload surges during the year.

7 In addition, the experience gleaned by the attorneys in the
8 two offices can enhance the Agency's capacity, as SBCR continues to develop
9 our own internal staff.

10 Last spring, the Equal Employment Opportunity
11 Commission conducted a technical assistance visit at the NRC. The results
12 of their review identified a number of best-practices the NRC employs in
13 maintaining a model EEO program. I'd like to highlight two of these.

14 First, our Comprehensive Diversity Management Plan
15 ensures a common focus on EEO and diversity management throughout the
16 Agency. Second, our Diversity Dialogue Program strives to create an
17 environment for raising concerns through empathetic listening, and
18 understanding of different perspectives.

19 The one area the EEOC identified for improvement is our
20 Alternative Dispute Resolution Program. The EEOC identified a drop in the
21 NRC's use of ADR over the years, and expressed a concern that our
22 managers were not supporting the program.

23 The mis-perception of manager non-support was, in part,
24 based on the way we were reporting and characterizing ADR. We now
25 calculate the program performance based on the ADR that is actually offered,
26 where previously we counted all complaints as a denominator, because we

1 always describe ADR to employees as a possible option. Depending on the
2 situation, ADR may not always be a viable option. Next slide.

3 The good news from this slide, which portrays civil rights
4 program performance this past year, is that we have not realized an increase
5 in the number of complaints based on some of the unprecedented changes,
6 such as the potential of a corporate support rift, and the need to reassign NRO
7 and Region II staff, due to the halt in construction of the VC Summer plant.

8 I believe this is particularly noteworthy, and may be
9 indicative of our effective change management. Uncertainty often leads to
10 misunderstandings that can fuel perceptions of disparate treatment.

11 The above chart shows that EEO activity is trending slightly
12 downward, as our staffing levels also decline.

13 I would also add that the EEO activity remained significantly
14 low at the NRC, in comparison to our other Federal Agencies of our size.
15 Next slide.

16 Examining the bases for formal complaints, age, sex and
17 reprisal have been most frequently cited, each equally contributing to 65 to 70
18 percent of formal cases.

19 In FY 2017, however, we have seen age, as a bases,
20 starting to trend above the other two. This is not surprising given the
21 composition of our workforce, where the average age of our employees
22 exceeds 40 years, which is the threshold to be considered in the protected
23 class.

24 This chart reflects all bases cited in a formal complaint,
25 which may include multiple bases. Hence, why the total here is greater than
26 the actual number of the formal complaints on the previous chart. Next slide,

1 please.

2 There has been a change in the top issue for formal
3 complaints from the past year in the area of reassignment of duties. This is
4 reflective of our current environment. As the NRC continues to reduce
5 staffing levels, essential work must be redistributed to the remaining staff.

6 As a result, there are also fewer promotion opportunities, as
7 positions are eliminated and workload is shifted to where there may be
8 capacity as other work goes away.

9 Harassment, as an issue, often accompanies other issues.
10 I'll discuss insights into the NRC's anti-harassment policy in my next slide.

11 Following our theme of partnering to last, embracing
12 diversity inclusion is a strategic imperative for the NRC, serves to not only
13 achieve our safety and security mission today, but creates a springboard that
14 ensures sustainability into the future we face.

15 The overall demographic profile of the NRC has not
16 significantly changed in the past five years. Our limited hiring and lack of
17 control over what attrition occurs, constrains our ability to effect change in our
18 overall demographics.

19 Where we can create change, and improve in leveraging our
20 diversity, is how our existing representation is distributed vertically and
21 horizontally throughout the Agency.

22 Focusing internally on inclusion can facilitate our efforts in
23 this regard. Our commitment has been reinforced by identifying diversity and
24 inclusion as an enterprise risk that we are all accountable to uphold.

25 Whether real or perceived, reducing resources for a
26 program often implies it is of less importance or relevance. Reinforcing what

1 we've done well, and how we can continue with broader involvement, will
2 serve to counter such concerns employees may have.

3 During a recent quarterly strategic alignment meeting,
4 observations from EEO cases were shared with the leadership team, to
5 broaden awareness of how deliberate and thoughtful actions cannot only
6 mitigate misunderstandings that often disrupt productivity, but can also
7 prevent the filing of an EEO complaint, and most importantly, preserve
8 workplace harmony.

9 Ensuring an inclusive work environment means being
10 responsive to the issues that can impede employees from bringing their whole
11 selves to the workplace.

12 In a recent dialogue cohort check-in, it was brought to our
13 attention that some of our employees are not familiar with the NRC's anti-
14 harassment policy; in particular, when and how to report harassment.

15 In response to this, OCHCO and SBCR have partnered in
16 preparing a yellow announcement reminding staff of the anti-harassment
17 policy, which is also referenced in the No-Fear Act training, which is a biannual
18 requirement all employees are required to complete next month.

19 A video of a panel discussion of anti-harassment reporting
20 pathways was held this past summer, and will soon be available through
21 iLearn. All employees are encouraged to view it, as we continue to explore
22 ways to enhance Agency-wide knowledge and awareness, to maintain a
23 harassment-free work environment.

24 As I shared at the start of my presentation, we have made
25 great strides in creating a diverse and inclusive work environment, and we
26 face both a necessity to sustain it, and have the capacity to build upon that

1 which we've created.

2 This concludes my remarks, and I'll now turn the briefing
3 over to Jennifer Golder, Deputy Chief Human Capital Officer, who will provide
4 an update on strategic workforce planning, and competency modeling.
5 Thank you.

6 MS. GOLDER: Thank you, Pam. Chairman Svinicki,
7 Commissioner Baran, Commissioner Burns, it's my honor to be at the table
8 today to discuss the status of strategic workforce planning, and competency
9 modeling. Slide 12, please.

10 In June, at the Human Capital Commission meeting, you
11 were briefed on the enhanced strategic workforce planning process that staff
12 developed.

13 In early July, the Executive Director for Operations approved
14 implementation of a pilot to test the enhanced process. The process will align
15 workload, skills and needs to meet short- and long-term Agency objectives.

16 It sets agency-wide human capital goals -- including overall
17 workforce size and skills composition -- which extend beyond the two-year
18 budget cycle.

19 It will also establish a structured, repeatable, and
20 comprehensive approach that can be built upon each year. It will leverage
21 and align with other existing Agency processes, such as budget formulation,
22 quarterly performance reporting, and strategic planning.

23 It will also identify and align with efficiencies from Project
24 AIM, as part of the workload forecast phase of the process.

25 Lastly, it also addresses the recommendations from the
26 recent GAO audit on Strategic Workforce Planning, such as training managers

1 and supervisors in strategic human capital management, and assessing
2 employee skill needs. Next slide, please.

3 The pilot will enable staff to test the process and make
4 adjustments before broader implementation occurs. A key to success is
5 developing the infrastructure to support each phase. This includes
6 performing a job analysis for core positions, which is a manager's systematic
7 examination of the tasks performed in a job, and the associated competencies.

8 Job analyses enable managers to take a fresh look at the
9 positions, helps identify the key competencies necessary for success, and
10 helps identify potential future skill gaps during the workload forecast and
11 demand phases.

12 Since the competency-modeling project is still underway,
13 staff is developing an inventory tool to track competencies for the core
14 positions, which will be based on the information from the completed job
15 analyses.

16 The inventory will support the strategy development phase
17 assisting with identification of skill sets that can be transferred to other
18 positions where gaps have been identified.

19 OCHCO and EDO -- OEDO -- formed a partnership with
20 Research, Region II, and OCFO, to implement the pilot. Biweekly meetings
21 with the implementation team, periodic checks with the pilot offices, and
22 regular written status updates, are providing input and feedback as the pilot
23 moves forward.

24 We are testing a database provided by the USDA Farm
25 Services Agency, that will be used during the supply phase, by supervisors,
26 as they complete a risk analysis of positions and competencies. By using an

1 existing tool, we reduce the amount of time necessary to develop, share and
2 analyze workforce data.

3 We continue to capture insights as we embark on each new
4 step in the process. We learned early on that there was some confusion
5 regarding how this effort aligned with competency modeling.

6 We developed a community to clarify the efforts, and we are
7 continuing to discuss it with our stakeholders, to increase awareness and
8 understanding. We also recognize there needs to be alignment on definition
9 of terms, such as position, roles, and competencies. As we develop
10 guidance, we are including definitions for clarity.

11 At the end of the pilot, we will turn to strengths, challenges,
12 lessons learned, and scalability of the process, in a report which will be given
13 to the Executive Director for Operations in late-summer, and will inform our
14 plans for broader scale implementation in the Agency. Slide 14, please.

15 This slide is a visual depiction of where we are currently.
16 We have completed Phase 1 -- setting the strategic direction -- and we are
17 moving into Phase 2 -- workforce supply analysis.

18 We've made progress on the development and
19 implementation of the pilot. Beginning in August and running through
20 September, we provided training for the managers in the pilot offices. The
21 pilot offices met in October to discuss their environmental scan with senior
22 management from the business side lead offices -- including NRR, NRO, and
23 NMSS -- and they completed the documentation at the beginning of
24 November.

25 Workload forecasts flow from the environmental scan, and
26 the offices will be submitting their forecasts in mid-December to the Office of

1 Executive Director for Operations, for approval. We will move into the
2 demand/supply component in the new calendar year.

3 This will be followed by gap analysis, strategic development,
4 and evaluation and monitoring. We appreciate the enthusiasm, support and
5 feedback we have received from the pilot offices and other stakeholders. I
6 envision they will serve as ambassadors for strategic workforce planning, we
7 implement beyond the pilot.

8 Now I'll move on to competency modeling. Slide 15,
9 please.

10 Competency models are built in partnership with the
11 program and corporate offices. We work closely with subject matter experts
12 who know how to do the job in support of the mission.

13 With their help we are building a competency based training
14 program. Competency models were introduced as a way to more efficiently
15 move employees between roles by not requiring training, or the competencies
16 needed for the new role had already been mastered.

17 We can gain efficiency and effectiveness in all of our
18 learning programs, by following the process outlined here.

19 First, build a model to identify the baseline requirements for
20 the job. Then ensure all training requirements are aligned with those
21 essential competencies. And last, adjust training content to align the
22 competencies and design, in the most efficient and effective manner.

23 This effort will also serve as the basis for improved individual
24 development through the automated creation and use of IDPs, and
25 supervisors will be able to compare employee skills against competencies
26 needed for new or potential future roles. Slide 16, please.

1 The project consists of many moving parts. Due to the
2 investment required to model, align qualifications and update curriculum, we
3 continue to develop the business case that will provide a cost and time
4 comparison between traditional qualification and competency based
5 programs.

6 Based on initial reviews of the health physics
7 decommissioning role, we believe we can sustain or enhance workforce
8 competency, and reduce approximately 140 hours of training, resulting in
9 approximately \$50,000 of savings per employee in formal training -- in formal
10 qualification programs.

11 This includes travel costs, as well as productivity hours
12 spent in training. We're beginning to work on the Resident Inspector Program
13 comparison, and expect similar benefits and savings, as well.

14 At the same time, we have accelerated modeling for most
15 roles in the Agency, which will support strategic workforce planning, while also
16 making training more efficient, effective, and personalized.

17 We will -- we have collected data from offices and regions
18 to identify roles in specialty positions that will be modeled, and we began the
19 job task analysis earlier this month.

20 We plan to model up to six positions at once, so there is a
21 need for significant communication and coordination with the offices, who are
22 our partners in this effort.

23 We will be relying on subject matter experts across the
24 Agency, who will be providing experience and knowledge to inform the
25 process. Additionally, we continue to recognize that there are roles that cross
26 Government -- such as in the financial management area -- and we plan to

1 leverage any work performed by other groups -- for example, the CFO
2 counsel. Next slide, please.

3 We have achieved several accomplishments so far. We
4 have built or purchased and customized models for six roles. Seven more
5 are currently in development. We have given access to the assessment toll
6 to approximately 400 employees in the Agency, and we have completed a
7 competency based qualification analysis for one inspector role.

8 We identified several areas where course updates are
9 needed to make the outcome match the actual task performed by the
10 inspectors. We have begun work on the analysis for the resident inspector
11 role. Next slide.

12 We've gained several insights as we build models. First,
13 there are many tasks happening simultaneously within this project, and with
14 other projects, like strategic workforce planning, which require input and
15 support from subject matter experts, and can be a draw on staff, time and
16 workload.

17 Communication and coordination needs to be more frequent
18 and effective at all levels, to ensure success. We added steps in our plan to
19 include more communication before and throughout development.

20 Second, our initial approach for the models was to focus on
21 tasks and behaviors. Based on feedback, we recognized we needed to also
22 identify specific technical knowledge. We've made adjustments to include
23 this as we move forward in future roles, and we are also going backwards
24 to -- going back to add it for roles already developed.

25 Third, there was some initial concern that assessments
26 could be inflated, and that supervisors and staff would not align. Data

1 collected so far indicates that employee appear to be more self-critical than
2 their supervisor assessments.

3 Self-identifying areas for improvement, this is leading to a
4 good discussion between supervisors and staff. We will continue looking at
5 this as we move forward to identify additional insights.

6 I thank Region II for providing valuable support with staff
7 helping on project management. I also appreciate the support and feedback
8 from numerous program offices and corporate offices. We hope to build on
9 this and partner with other offices in the future. Next slide, please.

10 As I mentioned, we have begun the work on refining the
11 Resident Inspector Qualification Program into a competency based format,
12 which should be completed by the end of January. And then we will conduct
13 the time and cost comparisons.

14 The Technical Training Center staff is learning how to create
15 the competency based qualifications from contractor. I envision in the future
16 we will be able to do this ourselves.

17 Earlier, I mentioned seven models are in development, and
18 this work is planned to continue through the end of 2019 for most roles within
19 the Agency.

20 And finally, we continue to develop the business case for
21 the competency based training and qualification, which is expected to be
22 completed by late-summer. That concludes my presentation, and I will now
23 turn it over to Cathy Haney for a highlight on Region II. Thank you.

24 MS. HANEY: Thanks, Jennifer. Good morning Chairman
25 Svinicki, Commissioner Baran, Commissioner Burns. It's my pleasure to be
26 here with you today to highlight some of the diversity and inclusion

1 accomplishments in Region II. Next slide, please.

2 Region II views diversity inclusion as vital to maintaining
3 success of our organization, as well as fulfilling the mission of the Nuclear
4 Regulatory Commission.

5 We're committed to developing agile leaders and
6 employees who can operate effectively in any environment. Our commitment
7 also expands to celebrate our differences through the support of community
8 service and diversity initiatives.

9 Region II's commitment reflects the value we place on
10 inclusion, and fostering diversity within NRC. Next slide, please.

11 Region II is committed to a workforce where all levels of the
12 organization reflect the diversity of NRC. Region's II staff is composed of 267
13 employees.

14 Our workforce, by gender and ethnicity, includes 29 percent
15 females, 10 percent Hispanic, 2 percent Native Americans, 25 percent
16 African- Americans, and 3 percent Asian-Pacific employees.

17 Most notable is the African-American, which is 25 percent of
18 our workforce. And African-Americans represent 19 percent of our
19 supervisory positions.

20 Overall, 30 percent of our supervisors are minorities. In
21 addition, veterans represent 32 percent of our population in Region II, with 6
22 percent being disabled veterans. Next slide, please.

23 In Region II, the leadership team has been engaged in
24 conversations to more fully understand, appreciate and celebrate diversity,
25 and to ensure that we are taking actions now to intentionally embrace and
26 grow our diversity.

1 This slides shows some of the topics that we've explored in
2 the past year. About a year ago, we worked with NRC's organizational
3 development experts to explore emotional intelligence and how it impacts the
4 way we engage each other and our staff.

5 Each manager on a team responded to a survey instrument,
6 and received a report highlighting his or her strengths and weaknesses in the
7 15 areas falling under the emotional intelligence umbrella.

8 Those attending the training were asked to provide
9 information on what they learned to their staff, with the goal of incorporating
10 the theories behind emotional intelligence into our day-to-day activities.

11 In addition, we studied and implemented concepts from the
12 appreciative inquiry model, to bring about collaborative and strength-based
13 change. Appreciate inquiry is a method which refocuses attention on what
14 works, the positive core, and on what people really care about.

15 Essentially, we benchmarked ourselves by looking at what
16 we did well. We then asked ourselves, what were the factors that contributed
17 to that level of performance, and looked for ways to apply those factors to
18 areas needing improvement.

19 The opportunity for rotational assignments is one element of
20 good career planning. Over the last year, we provided rotational
21 opportunities to Region II employees, and individuals from headquarters and
22 other regions.

23 In addition, Region II had the unique opportunity to rotate
24 managers at the Branch Chief level, into the division of Fuel Facility Inspection
25 Deputy Director position.

26 This rotation and this highly specialized fuel facility area

1 allow the managers to gain invaluable experience in the technical and
2 regulatory aspects of that position, along with a leadership perspective.

3 A total of 18 Region II positions were impacted by the
4 scanner decision to not move forward with the construction of the AP-1000
5 unit at the Summer site. As of today, almost all of the positions have been
6 vacated, and individuals are in the process of transitioning to new positions in
7 the Agency.

8 Jennifer has already mentioned the resident inspector
9 competency modeling and the strategic workforce planning project pilot.
10 Region II is one of the organizations that is piloting SWP.

11 In September, Region II identified 14 core positions,
12 working with OCHCO, Region II managers completed job analysis for all 14
13 positions, and have started to work on the workload forecasts for the region.
14 We look forward to working with the SWP implementation team to complete
15 the entire process.

16 In addition, I also have several individuals supporting the
17 development of the competency model for the senior resident and resident
18 position. Next slide, please.

19 We're engaged in a number of structured activities to help
20 our staff broaden their skills to increase our bench strength in critical skills.
21 We fully support the Agency's Mid-career Leadership Development Program,
22 the Aspiring Leaders Program, and the Leaders-at-all-level Program. And to-
23 date, we have had four employees receive their certificates.

24 In addition to NRC leadership programs, we have two
25 employees who completed the Atlanta Federal Executive Board Leadership
26 Government Program. These activities, taken together, are intended to

1 increase the Region's ability to address emergent work, and build future
2 leadership that is more broadly representative of our staff and the public that
3 we serve. Next slide, please.

4 Region II maintains its connection with the Atlanta Federal
5 Executive Board. We continue our engagement by recognizing employees
6 through the annual Federal Executive Board Employee of the Year awards.

7 Region II is honored to nominate ten employees for the
8 2017 Annual Award Recognition program. From these nominations we had
9 one winner and two finalists.

10 Omar Lopez Santiago was the winner in the Outstanding
11 Manager category. Cynthia Haynes was a finalist in the Outstanding
12 Administrative Assistant category, and Nicole Coover was a finalist in the
13 Outstanding Professional category. Next slide, please.

14 We are grateful for the opportunity to highlight our
15 employees through programs outside the Agency. Recently, Alejandro Alen,
16 a resident inspector at the Vogtle Operating Nuclear Plant, received a
17 prestigious national award.

18 Alejandro was named Illuminary Honoree by Great Minds in
19 Science, Technology and Engineering Mathematics, a California-based group
20 that recognizes Hispanic leaders in industry and Government. We're very
21 proud of Alejandro's accomplishments. Next slide, please.

22 Region II employees are committed to supporting
23 organization programs and events outside their normal work duties, and are
24 consistent with NRC's diversity and inclusion initiatives. I'd like to highlight a
25 few of those individuals today.

26 Stephen Downey, Jamie Heisserer, Pam Kruger, and

1 Shakur Walker, all understand the important role volunteer service plays in
2 our communities. Stephen Downey -- one of our reactor inspectors -- spends
3 time mentoring college students at Florida A&M University, who are pursuing
4 engineer degrees, both at the bachelor's and doctoral level.

5 Stephen recently served as a member of the dissertation
6 committee for a student who successfully defended and graduated with a
7 Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering.

8 Region II Branch Chief, Jamie Heisserer, participates as a
9 judge in the First Tech Challenge's robotic competitions. First Tech is an
10 organization that encourages students of all ages to pursue interest in science,
11 technology, engineering and mathematics.

12 The organization also values gracious professionalism -- a
13 way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, and respects
14 individuals in the community.

15 Pam Kruger -- Site Administrative Assistant at Nuclear Fuel
16 Services -- volunteers at the Jonesboro Senior Center in Jonesboro,
17 Tennessee. Ms. Kruger spends time assisting with tours of the facility, and
18 greeting seniors as they enter the center. And one of her projects, she
19 assists with videotaping the seniors telling their life story.

20 As a youth advocate, Shakur Walker -- another Region II
21 Branch Chief -- works with an organization called the Orange Duffel Bag
22 Initiative. The Orange Duffel Bag Initiative provides at-risk teens and young
23 adults -- many of whom are homeless or in foster care -- programs to improve
24 their education success.

25 From assisting as little league coaches, serving as foster
26 parents to support disability programs, other Region II employees are

1 dedicated to supporting and helping communities thrive. Next slide, please.

2 To further demonstrate the commitment of Region II
3 employees, each year a group of Region II employees volunteer to do a
4 phenomenal job sponsoring the bring -- take-your-child-to-work day.

5 The event provides a fun-filled day that engages children of
6 all ages, and builds bonds across the organization as our families come
7 together. Next slide.

8 Region II's diversity resource groups are a symbol of the
9 organization's commitment to diversity. Many of our special emphasis
10 groups plan and sponsor a number of cultural awareness events, social
11 events, and staff celebrations, including the Black History Month celebration,
12 volunteering with Hosea Feed-the-Hungry at Martin Luther King Day 2017,
13 and hosting a dessert social celebrating Pride Month, just to highlight a few.
14 Next slide, please.

15 Region II is committed to supporting our veteran and military
16 employees. We understand the depth and breadth of experience they bring
17 to the organization. The 2017 Veterans Day Program highlighted a Region II
18 administrative assistant who presented a firsthand account of her experience
19 in the military.

20 In addition, the keynote speaker -- Ms. Jennifer McKindae
21 (phonetic) -- participated in the Wounded Warrior Project. She presented an
22 inspiring story on how the Wounded Warrior Project stepped in to assist her
23 after her brother suffered multiple injuries while on mission with his brigade
24 during the Iraq war. Next slide, please.

25 Region II's ultimate goal is to create a work life where all
26 employees feel valued and comfortable being who they are, regardless of their

1 individual differences. Creating this type of environment allows employees
2 to grow, learn and maximize his or her potential, and contribute to the
3 Agency's success.

4 With that now, I will turn the presentation over the Maureen
5 Wylie, Office of the Chief Financial Officer.

6 MS. WYLIE: Thank you very much, Cathy. Good
7 morning, Chairman Svinicki and Commissioners Baran and Burns.

8 I'm very excited about the opportunity to speak with you
9 today about OCFO's focus on collaboration between management and staff.
10 We are, in fact, partnering to last. Slide 33, please.

11 Our focus has been on improving our employee
12 engagement scores, and -- because we believe that that's the key to all other
13 improvements in both our operation, and how people feel about the office.

14 The Employee Engagement Index measures the conditions
15 that are conducive to engagement, and measures three subfactors -- leaders
16 lead, supervisors, and intrinsic work experience. So we're looking at the
17 green line on the right of the chart. We have seen a growth of 14 percent in
18 that score since 2012 at 77 percent for the office.

19 We've also seen substantial improvement in the new IQ
20 index, which measures how employees see cooperation, empowerment,
21 fairness, openness, and how well they're supported. We've had a ten percent
22 growth in this index, which new since 2013.

23 We believe fundamentally, that diversity inclusion make us
24 better, and we'll talk about that a little bit later, in a later side.

25 And then finally, as a result of our heavy workload in
26 2017 -- and I'm sure you remember the budget traffic jam, our system changes

1 and our cost activity management program, particularly during the survey
2 period -- we experienced a decline in participation in the survey.

3 Unfortunately, our response rate went down five percent
4 between 2016 and '17, to 59 percent. That is 17 percent below the agency-
5 wide average. We still have work to go on getting people to fill out the form
6 and give us feedback. Next slide, please.

7 We've spent quite a bit of time in OCFO talking about the
8 various measures. I wanted to give you a sample of questions which show
9 where we have improved, so -- what we call looking good -- as well as focus
10 areas for the future, needs improvement.

11 As an example of improvement, we can see in parts of the
12 human capital assessment and accountability framework, particularly around
13 results-oriented performance culture. So Question 32-- creativity and
14 innovation are rewarded -- this is the only question in the survey related to
15 innovation.

16 We have seen a 15 percent increase in the score -- in the
17 positive score on this measure since last year, and a 21 increase since 2014.
18 I'm very excited about that. I think that's directly contributed to our success.

19 However, there are plenty of areas where we still can work
20 to improve, and there are also parts of our Agency of our office where more
21 improvement is needed than others.

22 An example of an area needing improvement is Question
23 37-- Arbitrary Action, Personal Favoritism and Coercion for partisan political
24 purposes, are not tolerated. We've seen a decrease of 13 percent on this
25 question since last year.

26 Even within that direct decline, there is positive information.

1 The neutral score for this question actually increased, and the negative score
2 declined. So what that tells me, is that while employees are uncertain about
3 how to answer, we still have time to work and meet their trust, so that we can
4 keep them from moving to more negative score. Go to the next slide, please.

5 I'm very proud to talk about the people of OCFO. We are
6 not a copy of the patterns of the Agency as a whole. For example, we have
7 a higher ratio of females to males than the Agency at large. OCFO as an
8 office is 77 percent female.

9 That's 37 percent for the Agency, and 49 percent
10 Government-wide. So there's definitely a different picture here.

11 Also, in terms of race and national origin, we have a larger
12 percentage of minority population than the rest of the Agency. We are almost
13 at a 50/50 split between whites and people of color. And that's a substantial
14 difference from the Agency and the Government at large, which is at 35
15 percent, roughly.

16 We do, however, closely parallel the educational
17 demographics of the Agency as a whole. We have the same percentage of
18 bachelor's and master's degrees as the rest of the Agency. Although,
19 obviously we have fewer who have obtained doctoral and professional
20 degrees. And we are approximately as old as the rest. Next slide, please.

21 So over time, we've been focused on collaboration and
22 partnership, and we've had a variety of action plans to get at specific issues,
23 and broadly, the issues of accountability and trust.

24 We do this by creating working groups. Some are just
25 employees, some are employees in management. We try to meet the needs
26 of employees as we attack different topics. Our most successful and our

1 longest duration group is Communications and Collaboration. That's a forum
2 that meets monthly. It's -- it -- with -- typically with the Deputy CFO.

3 They've developed many modes of communication for us to
4 use to do a better job of not just me talking to them, but of employees
5 interacting and communicating with each other. That's been, I think,
6 extremely successful.

7 We also made a specific plan to advocate for the
8 organization with our stakeholders, both within the organization, NRC at large,
9 and with our external stakeholders in industry. We did extensive outreach,
10 we've expanded our planning with our stakeholders, so they'll understand why
11 OCFO often asks them to do the things that they do, and to tell them what we
12 do with their information afterwards.

13 Around invoicing and budgeting, we've had sustained
14 engagement with our external stakeholders. You've heard some of the
15 results of that. I think what's most important is it's led to a reduction in
16 customer complaints, and improvement of scores on our GSA survey.

17 But for me, the most important thing is it allows my team
18 members to feel that they are seen and heard, and valued for the work that
19 they do. And I think that's most important.

20 We've also tried to increase our cultural accountability. We
21 had a specific staff-only trust and accountability group. We stole that idea
22 from NRO -- thanks very much to them.

23 But a great idea is worth stealing. And their innovation was
24 to develop a staff management forum where staff can, in safe ways, ask
25 questions of first-line supervisors and senior management, so that we can put
26 difficult issues out for discussion. It's not always the most comfortable

1 meeting we have. But I think it's been very important for clearing the air, and
2 for our culture.

3 And then finally, we are focused like a laser on helping
4 people improve their skill gaps. We've done improvements with targeted
5 training, we've had employees provide training to each other, wherever
6 they've had skill sets.

7 We have a specific learning group where we're actively
8 involved in managing this. And we've been well supported by OCHCO as we
9 supported people's efforts to become qualified to take accounting jobs, which
10 have 24 hours of education required.

11 For the future, we plan to use speed-of-trust as our focus,
12 particularly since trust is the foundation of everything else. We want to
13 continue to follow up on some of the areas that we've identified as
14 improvement opportunities, and without trust, we can't build employee
15 engagement or global satisfaction. Next slide, please.

16 One of our important efforts over the last three-year period,
17 has been the development of a shared vision. First, we met as a
18 management team collaboratively, to set goals and builds on our priorities.
19 Many of them are reflected on the Board, which is where we keep track of our
20 most important issues.

21 But once we did that, we did extensive staff input, including
22 surveys and an office-wide meeting where we really talked about what was
23 important to us. Because we felt we wanted to have that unifying vision.

24 And as you see here, that vision is excellence in innovation
25 and financial management through trusted leadership, integrated teamwork,
26 strategic partnerships, open communication, and continuous learning. Next

1 slide, please.

2 So obviously, it takes a team. I -- we have been successful
3 because we've had employee-driven solutions on tough issues. Some of
4 those issues have not made us universally popular with the Agency at large,
5 but they were things that needed to be done.

6 In particular, employees brought me concerns and solutions
7 around our cellphone reimbursement policy. And then of course, the license
8 fee billing activities that we've been engaged in over a three-year period, when
9 I arrived in my first week, I had a briefing on the 41 improvements that were
10 needed in license fee billing. They didn't need me to tell them what to do.
11 They needed me to help them figure out how to get it done.

12 And then of course, we've attempted to manage budget
13 workload collaboratively as the budget process has become more friction-filled
14 over the last several years.

15 You can't do this without strong supervisory support for the
16 initiative. We have a first-line supervisors counsel. They collaborate with
17 each other on how to get the work done, and how to support one another.
18 We had a six percent increase in the supervisory index year over year. So
19 the results are clear.

20 It's also about the art of the possible. When you employ
21 empow- -- when you empower employees and try to enhance their
22 engagement, I believe perfect is the enemy of the good. When they bring
23 you solutions, I find way- -- I work hard with my management team to find
24 ways to say yes, so that we can implement and move on to the next task.

25 That also requires us to prioritize, and we do that together.
26 And then that allows us to then say, we've got a good solution here, let's work

1 for continuous improvement going forward, rather than polishing the diamond
2 further.

3 And then finally, work can be fun too. Because as you may
4 have heard me say before, all the fun in the Agency is being had in OCFO.
5 I'm convinced of that.

6 We had our fabulous open house in 2015. We have annual
7 picnics and holiday parties. But more important, we've had several trips to
8 operating reactors, so that our employees can enhance their tie to our mission.
9 And then just recently, we had a fairly spirited game of CFO Jeopardy.
10 So -- next slide.

11 With apologies to Drake --

12 [Plays Drake video: + Starting from the bottom now we're
13 here. Starting from the bottom now we're here +]

14 In 2013, OCFO was at the absolute bottom in terms of our
15 employee engagement score. In 2016, we were tied with OCHCO at tenth
16 overall. And now in 2017, we're tied for seventh with Research and NRO.

17 I want you to know that the song was recommended to me
18 by staff.

19 (Laughter.)

20 It's on my iPod. Anyway, I'll now turn the briefing over to
21 Jennene Littlejohn, Chair for the Advisory Committee on African-Americans.
22 Thank you very much.

23 MS. LITTLEJOHN: Thank you, Maureen. Good morning,
24 Chairman Svinicki, Commissioner Baran, and Burns. I would like to start by
25 thanking each of you for your personal support for diversity and inclusion here
26 at the NRC.

1 It is my honor to speak on the behalf of the Diversity
2 Management Advisory Committee -- DMAC -- which represents the collective
3 voice of non-volunteer groups, eight equal employment -- employment
4 opportunity advisory committees, and one employee resource group.

5 We are the Advisory Committee for African-
6 Americans -- ACAA -- which I chair. The Advisory Committee for Employees
7 with Disabilities with Disabilities -- ACED -- the Advisory Committee for
8 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Employees -- ACLGBT -- the Asian-
9 Pacific American Advisory Committee -- APAAC -- the Diversity Advisory
10 Committee on Ageism -- DACA -- the Federal Women's Program Advisory
11 Committee -- FWPAC -- the Hispanic Employment Program Advisory
12 Committee -- HEPAC -- the Native American Advisory
13 Committee -- NAAC -- and the Veterans Employee Research Group -- VERG.

14 The DMAC coordinates among these committees, and
15 works with the Office of Small Business and Civil Rights, to support
16 recruitment, professional development, retention, and diversity.

17 In keeping with this year's briefing theme -- partnering to
18 last -- my joint statement focuses on partnering among committees,
19 committees partnering executive sponsors, and partnering between
20 employees and their supervisors. Slide 40, please.

21 We work collectively to ensure that goals -- we work
22 collectively to ensure that our goals are met, and to expand diversity and
23 inclusion at the NRC.

24 Over the last year, the committees have enhanced
25 partnering in collaboration to make the NRC an even better place to work.
26 This year has been another busy year for the advisory committees, with

1 changes in the Agency and Federal Government as a whole.

2 The committees co-sponsor events to assist staff members
3 in navigating these changing times. It is extremely important for the
4 committees to continue to support each other, as the Office of Small Business
5 and Civil Rights has reduced in size.

6 For example, FWPAC, NAC, APAAC and ASED co-
7 sponsored Take-Your-Seat-At-The-Table. APAAC and NAC co-sponsored
8 Career Planning and Development in Changing Times.

9 NAC, ACLGBT and HEPAC co-sponsored Get Your Career
10 Out of Hibernation. In Region III, FWPAC and ACAA co-sponsored hitting
11 figures movie outing and brunch, which we emulated here at headquarters this
12 summer in the showing and discussing of the movie.

13 Region I leveraged the Regional DMAC to enhance the
14 Diversity Champion Program, while reducing travel costs.

15 By fostering partnerships, we reach a larger segment of
16 NRC's employees, including our regional employees. In building
17 partnerships, committee members and volunteers work with a diverse group
18 of people, and enhance their leadership skills.

19 Committee members and volunteers gain different
20 perspectives, enhance teamwork and cooperation, and build long-lasting
21 relationships. In addition to these individual benefits, partnering also
22 produces organizational benefits, such as increased capacities, teamwork,
23 and agility. Slide 41, please.

24 During the last year, we promoted diversity inclusion by
25 partnership with our executive sponsors. SBCR established the Executive
26 Sponsor Program in 2015 to promote interaction between committees and

1 leadership.

2 Through this program, members of our Agency's senior-
3 level core provide advice about effective leadership, with the context of
4 Agency culture.

5 They also offer ideas, broker solutions, and mentor our
6 leadership. They play a key role in the enhancement of teamwork among
7 staff and management.

8 By partnering with our executive sponsors, advisory
9 committee members gain support and insights for conducting activities, and
10 executive sponsors are able to nurture the professional development and
11 engagement of employees. Slide 42, please.

12 Finally, we and DMAC have made over the last year by
13 encouraging partnering between supervisors and employees, to enhance their
14 communication.

15 As an example, on March 1, 2017 ACAA, FWPAC and
16 APAC hosted an event titled, Building the Foundation to Radically Transform
17 Your Career. We focused on several questions, including, how can I build a
18 solid career foundation if I cannot have a conversation with my supervisor
19 regarding my career goals?

20 With the EDO's encouragement, ACAA then partnered with
21 the other EEO advisory committees to develop a video on the importance of
22 supervisors in the developing and advancing of their employees.

23 Even with the progress that we've made over the year,
24 there's still work that needs to be done. ACAA and all of the other committees
25 will work together to make the NRC an even better place to work by partnering
26 to last.

1 Now I would like to show you a trailer of the supervisor
2 video.

3 [VIDEO PLAYED]

4 VOICE: Hello. My name is Jennene Littlejohn, and I'm the Chair of
5 the Advisory Committee for African-Americans. In the spring of
6 2017, ACAA sat down with the EDO to discuss our goals for the year.
7 In that briefing, we discussed, how can the staff help current and
8 future supervisors understand the importance of their role in their
9 employees' career.

10 I'm just to appreciative that they -- each one of them was
11 able to kind of take a break from the technical world and kind of hom
12 e in on what I wanted to do in the administrative field, whether that
13 was their expertise or not.

14 With the approval of EDO, ACAA, along with the other EEO
15 advisory committees, developed the super supervisor video. In this
16 video you will hear from NRC staff sharing their individual
17 experiences in regards to what it takes to be a super supervisor.

18 To be a great supervisor, you've got to have heart. Okay?
19 Heart. And basically, that H-E-A-R-T. You got to be honest, you
20 got to have empathy, you have to have attitude, respect, and tenacity.

21 [END OF VIDEO]

22 This concludes my presentation. I will now turn it back over
23 to Mike Johnson for his final remarks.

24 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Jennene. If -- well if that
25 doesn't get you to want to go out and see the video, I don't know --

26 Chairman, Commissioners, we appreciate the opportunity to

1 brief you on the EEO and Diversity Inclusion programs. As you've heard,
2 we've made changes to sustain and grow our EEO and diversity and inclusion
3 programs.

4 We appreciate that our down- -- even as a result of our
5 downsizing, we have not significantly impacted our overall demographics, and
6 we remain committed to the importance of diversity and inclusion programs.

7 The investment that we're making to enhance the strategic
8 workforce planning, as described by Jennifer, and to further -- will further
9 enable us to make sure that we have the right people in the right position, with
10 the right skills, to do the Agency's safety and security work.

11 And finally, as you saw, our partnerships across the
12 Agency -- through those partnerships across the Agency, we are building a
13 diverse and inclusive workforce. That concludes our presentation, and we
14 are ready to take your questions. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you so much, Mike, and
16 what a wonderful set of presentations. Whether or not you had trailer or
17 teaser videos, you all did a really great job, and we get to learn a little bit more
18 about Maureen's music library that she has.

19 (Laughter.)

20 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: When we see her rocking out in the
21 elevator on the way to her car at the end of the day, now we'll know that it's
22 Drake and others.

23 But there are any number of things I could call out and just
24 offer my personal compliments and congratulations, not just to the presenters,
25 but to all of those who supported and helped to make it possible, the
26 successes that you all have talked about today. It's definitely, as Maureen

1 said, it takes a team. And it's an effort to be on those sitting at the table,
2 which you all have acknowledged.

3 I want to compliment the Agency once again on its
4 tremendous outreach in the small business area, the A+ score. Many, many
5 agencies and departments, as I've mentioned in years past, would long dream
6 of that kind of a small business achievement score. And again, we don't take
7 it for granted.

8 And Pam talked about and acknowledged the challenges as
9 our goal goes up every year and we have a shrinking pool of opportunity but
10 we have to redouble our efforts. And that way I think that you and your team
11 are bringing some real creativity to that challenge in the coming fiscal, the
12 current fiscal year, and I appreciate that.

13 Thought it was an interesting example about OGC and
14 OCAA providing a rotational opportunity for some attorneys to go over to
15 SBCR. And it really, it helped with a near-term organization need, as Pam
16 mentioned. But I am very confident that those two individuals have the ability
17 to take that back to their home organizations.

18 I think there were clear synergies for NRC as a whole that
19 were created there. So that's a wonderfully innovative and kind of widening
20 the aperture way of thinking about a near-term challenge. And I think it's
21 interesting as well to have had the EEOC technical assistance visit.

22 I appreciate you highlighting, you know, an area where they
23 thought perhaps we should relook and do some improvements maybe just on
24 our understandings and communication on the use of alternative dispute
25 resolution. I know that oftentimes those who elect to go through that process
26 do fine that it is satisfying, I think, in a very productive way to address concerns

1 that are raised.

2 So I hope that we've identified, I think, some of the causes
3 there, but we should continue to look at communicating the availability of ADR,
4 and then maybe documenting, you know, positive examples in a generic
5 sense so that others could say, If I elected this, how would it look for me and
6 what might it mean. So I think that that's very important.

7 And Jennene, thank you so much for the video, which is
8 always great. You know, I think the Commission is coming to kind of count
9 on the fact that we're going to have a video at these meetings. So you
10 certainly swung for the fences and came through there, so thank you for that.

11 But more generally, just the work of the committees.
12 You've acknowledged that the Commissioners have such an involvement
13 throughout the year in that. And you know, again, having served with a lot of
14 different members of this Commission, that is a very authentic feeling that we
15 have about the importance of the committees and their work.

16 And now to have the DMAC as kind of a super-coordinating
17 function, I think that that's adding a lot to maybe what were more separate
18 initiatives. And now there can be a way to really be weaving those efforts
19 together in a complimentary fashion. So I think that that's all for the better.

20 And then, you know, I wanted to comment, some have
21 mentioned first-line supervisors and the role they play throughout the Agency.
22 I've said in meetings past that in some ways, that could be looked at as one
23 of the most challenging roles to carry out in a large organization such as ours.

24 And so I challenge everyone to think about the elements of
25 the topics that we've talked about today, how can those be helping and just
26 further reinforcing the important role. And as first-line supervisors go about

1 their duties, which again put them so directly in support of the Agency's
2 mission, but also with a supervisory and management overlay that really adds
3 to their day-to-day obligations and responsibilities.

4 If there's elements of what we're doing, what we're piloting,
5 what we're deploying that can be helping them to do that tough job, I
6 encourage us all to take a moment to think about if there's opportunity that we
7 can find in all these broad initiatives that we're talking about.

8 When we talked about the enhanced strategic workforce
9 planning, Jennifer talked about that and the competency modeling, which
10 have some connection as you mentioned, was a great overview of kind of the
11 stepwise process that we're going through, some of the synergies between
12 the two.

13 But as I was listening to that, I thought of the two
14 organizations, Region II and OCFO, that we asked to come here and highlight
15 their programs this year.

16 I think they each had challenges that, or opportunities, that
17 enhanced strategic workforce planning and competency modeling, if they
18 realize their full potential, could maybe have helped them work through those
19 types of issues. And in the future, as a large organization, we'll continue to
20 have unexpected things and challenges.

21 In the case of Region II, it was the decision on the Summer
22 Construction Project which caused, you know, us to have to take a rapid look
23 at the employees assigned to that work and their competencies. And then to
24 have an understanding of our workload projections, which would, again, out
25 of enhanced strategic workforce planning, we hope to continue to have a
26 good, exquisite knowledge of at least a forecast there.

1 And it seems to me that if the two elements of enhanced
2 strategic workforce planning and competency modeling were not at the
3 developmental stage but were completed, so for future NRC, having those
4 elements in place I think would be advantageous.

5 And in the case of OCFO, there were positions in OCFO
6 potentially impacted by the potential for a reduction in force. And so I know
7 again, it occurs to me that competency modeling and enhanced strategic
8 workforce planning could have helped.

9 So I would ask maybe Jennifer as a generic matter, but
10 Cathy and Maureen, if they have anything to say about kind of thinking about
11 these initiatives that we hope to position us with greater strength and agility
12 and resiliency for the future. Do you agree that had those been in place, it
13 might have just enhanced your speed or efficiency with which you could
14 address these kinds of changes and challenges?

15 MS. WYLIE: So I'm happy to start, because we've been
16 involved at the CFO Counsel level on an essentially competency pathways
17 and models for the critical both entry journey and mastery levels of our critical
18 positions already. So we had a little something already before we started to
19 do competency modeling here.

20 That's one of the reasons I volunteered to participate,
21 because I felt I could bring some of that to the table. And we had already
22 done some skills assessing, so we knew who needed to have additional
23 support to be qualified for other positions. So given our experience, I agree,
24 if you have that available to you, it's definitely an enhancement for when we
25 downsize.

26 And we did move people based on developing of their skills

1 into funded positions out of unfunded work.

2 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you. Cathy.

3 MS. HANEY: I would agree. I think it would help. Region
4 was a little bit different than NRO in needing to place individuals. Because
5 the majority of our people that were impacted by the SCANIT decision fell into
6 two categories: resident inspectors and then regional inspectors.

7 And what I've gained through learning, being more and
8 more engaged with the two efforts, is there are some core characteristics that
9 apply across the inspector. Something as simple as dealing with the public,
10 engaging in conversations, say, what some have referred to as the softer
11 skills.

12 I'm not sure I'm ready to label those as the softer skills,
13 because those can really make or break. You could be a wonderful tech from
14 a technological standpoint and know your field correctly, but if you don't have
15 some of those skills, I would say maybe not going to be as successful in the
16 long run.

17 So I think where, I have two really groups that are working
18 on these efforts in the region. But in talking to them, to they're really coming
19 down to a lot of the similar things that they're going to the baseline
20 characteristics that you need the qualifications that are coming through and
21 already labeled in ours. Like for example, Chapters 12-45 that talks about
22 the qualifications for inspectors.

23 So we do have a couple of points that, places that we can
24 pull from on the technical issues. But certainly if we had these tools in place,
25 they would definitely help us in the long run if we were to engage in this in the
26 future.

1 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you. Mike, did you want to
2 add maybe from the programmatic standpoint on that?

3 MR. JOHNSON: Yes, I did. If, in fact, NRO were here,
4 they would talk about the similar activity that they had where they actually
5 moved individuals across office, across business lines. So the look that we
6 did to find matches was an Agency look. That would be further enhanced if
7 we had the tool, if we had the ready tool.

8 There are folks in NRO who are going to the Center of
9 Expertise in NMSS for rulemaking. So that's an example of how we can be
10 agile if we have the right tools to be able to do that. We were successful in
11 this instance, we'll be even more successful, more agile in the future with the
12 availability of the tool.

13 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you. Jennifer, did you
14 want to add, or do you think that kind of covers it? I will say --

15 MS. GOLDBER: I think they covered it.

16 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Okay, and no one has mentioned,
17 just because it's well known to us inside the Agency. But again, in cases
18 where work went away, we did move, we do have natural attrition that is
19 always going on as an Agency. So there are positions that are available.

20 I think people think maybe our workforce is a little more
21 static than it is. It is a large organization, so there's always some level of
22 attrition going on, and that provided this opportunity for the movement of
23 individuals. I just wanted to clarify that in case that wasn't well understood.

24 Well, again, I thank you all for your presentations, and for all
25 those who are here today who support the efforts that we've talked about,
26 thank you for that. And with that, I will recognize Commissioner Baran.

1 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Thanks. Well, thank you all
2 for your presentations and all the work and effort and successes that they
3 reflect. We really appreciate it.

4 I wanted to just continue the conversation with some
5 questions on the strategic workforce planning and the pilot there. Jennifer,
6 you explained that the staff recently completed the job analyses for core
7 positions. Can you talk a little bit more about what that involved and how that
8 went?

9 MS. GOLDBER: Yes. So the job analyses is, it's, they are
10 set of questions that we, that the supervisors work through to really
11 understand the competencies associated with different positions and roles.
12 And it really helps, as I mentioned in the presentation, it gives them a fresh
13 perspective on what they're looking for.

14 The job analyses, not only is it helping us really define the
15 competencies associated with the core positions that we're identifying for the
16 pilot, but it can also be used to help us to connect to recruiting and merit
17 staffing vacancies. So that when we are able to or when we advertise a
18 vacancy, we can understand really what we're asking for, what we need, the
19 competencies we need.

20 And so the job analyses takes supervisors through a series
21 of questions to help them understand what they're looking for. And then that
22 can be used to feed into a position description, create a new plan, a vacancy
23 announcement. It helps us, it is helping us populate a skills inventory tool
24 that we're testing through the pilot.

25 The way we approached it in the pilot is interesting. We
26 had three offices, and instead of doing the same, having the same with each

1 pilot office, we actually had a little bit of, we used a different technique with
2 each office. So for Region II, we OCHCO staff went to Region II and they
3 met with all of the managers.

4 And we sat down and they interviewed them and they
5 worked through, they did the, our staff did the job analyses for Region II. And
6 then we, based on the conversations we had, we developed it, gave it back to
7 them, and continued to refine it.

8 CFO, we worked through their point of contact and they
9 worked with their management. So the CFO point of contact for the pilot
10 developed their job analyses for their core positions, and then obtained
11 management feedback. And for research, we trained the managers and they
12 worked the job analyses.

13 And the benefit of doing this three different ways is we
14 wanted to see through the pilot if there's really, if there's one best way to do it.
15 Or as we move forward to implement Agency-wide or a broader scale, can we
16 employ different techniques. And we're finding that we can definitely use
17 different techniques to get this information, which I think is good, because it
18 will help us, I think, become more flexible as an organization.

19 COMMISSIONER BARAN: And is there like a typical
20 number of competencies that are then reflected in a position? What's the
21 range, is it like three, five, is it ten, I mean is there?

22 MS. GOLDBER: I'm looking at my staff over there. I'd say
23 they're not necessarily a set number. I mean, it could range between maybe
24 five and fifteen. Yes, I'm getting a nod, so that is correct.

25 (Laughter.)

26 COMMISSIONER BARAN: So then the, just kind of going

1 through the steps. In December, it looks like the staff's scheduled to produce
2 a propose workload forecast. How will that workload forecast be developed
3 and how will it differ from prior forecasts?

4 MS. GOLDER: That's a great question. I think it's going
5 to connect to our environmental scan. It's going to be I think a little more
6 detailed. Or we're trying to create more structure while also giving us
7 flexibility.

8 And there's going to be a little qualitative and quantitative
9 data in there. We're still developing it though. I don't know if anyone wants
10 to, if Mike or Christian wanted to add anything.

11 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Mike's pointing to someone
12 else.

13 MS. GOLDER: Or Maureen.

14 MS. WYLIE: And I'll speak for Mike too and he can correct
15 me, because he was showing me some of his workload analysis. So it really
16 does vary depending on what office that you're in. Mike's using our new EPID
17 structure to understand the volume of work that he has today in terms of hours
18 and cost.

19 And then do projections out five years to see where the
20 trends are in terms, what will be done, what may need to be enhanced. So
21 he's got a very data-driven set of work.

22 Mine is more calendar-driven and statutory and regulatory
23 requirements driven. You know, at a certain date, we have to produce a
24 thing. So it really has varied for us.

25 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Can I just say, because this is
26 being webcast, the Mike is not Mike Johnson, who's sitting at the table. It's

1 Mike Weber, the Director of the Office of Research. Just clarifying.

2 MS. WYLIE: I apologize for that.

3 MS. HANEY: I would say one of the interesting things from
4 the regional perspective, and it does touch a little bit to the Office of Research,
5 but working across all business lines. Because when we kicked off this effort
6 at the regional level, it was a conversation with, we have three, I have three
7 business lines that feed into my organization.

8 So it was a matter of reaching out to all the headquarters
9 offices. We had our perspective on what a workload forecast, but making
10 sure that we're aligned with the program offices here in headquarters. So it
11 really did result in a lot of very good dialog, and this is at the practical level.
12 And now we're in the process of rolling it up.

13 COMMISSIONER BARAN: And traditionally we've done
14 this in like two years out, right, and now we're going five years out, is that?
15 And can you talk a little bit about, you know, with every year further into the
16 future, there are presumably increased uncertainties about what the
17 workload's going to look like. How are you all kind of coping with that?

18 You know, I mean, so it's easier to say, well, we really
19 expect this application to come in next year, or another application to come in
20 two years from now. But you're five years out and it's all a little bit harder to
21 project. Are you doing timelines, or are there other ways you're trying to
22 come up with something that has some fidelity that far out?

23 MS. HANEY: Well, again, from the regional perspective,
24 it's a challenge to do that. And it would be, like especially in Region II, if you
25 look at the recent announcements in the fuel facility area, where a plant, the
26 workload starting very near term is going to decrease.

1 So projecting out what will that be in five years, that's a
2 challenge. When is that going to come back in? Now, again, in the resource
3 atmosphere, that's a very small resource question. But then you look into the
4 construction area, it is a little challenging, where are we going future in the
5 construction.

6 In Region II, the decommissioning, we don't forecast that
7 currently. So it, I would say it's, I'm not necessarily answering your question
8 directly, but it is a big challenge for us. And to judge what is, what's going to
9 happen.

10 And it's very important that we're keeping that external
11 awareness of what's going on in industry in the engagements that we have,
12 through my staff out at the sites, as well as through the program offices.

13 COMMISSIONER BARAN: The aforementioned Mike
14 Weber has emerged.

15 MR. WEBER: Thanks for the opportunity. Mike Weber,
16 Director of Research. For us, it's really the state of knowledge. So what
17 we're trying to take into account, because we're not driven so much by how
18 many amendments are we processing, how many license renewals are we
19 reviewing.

20 It's really taking into account the maturity of the research
21 that we've launched years ago and that are now being sunset because we've
22 achieved the research objectives. It's taking into account emerging
23 technologies that are being communicated to us by the industry saying they
24 are very interested.

25 We had a workshop this week on additive manufacturing
26 technology, for example. So we're trying to examine, well, what are the

1 research needs, if any, that would be associated with that work. And it takes
2 into account the needs of the regulatory programs that we're supporting, which
3 are in fact driven by workload.

4 And so all that is being rolled up into our best forecast of
5 where we think we're going to be, and at the same time taking into account
6 variables and key drivers that might be impacting that. What if it's more?
7 What if we're doing advanced reactor work more than what we're doing
8 currently?

9 So that's fuzzy cloud type answer to your question, but that's
10 what we're doing in research.

11 MR. JOHNSON: Thanks. And some of the fuzziness and
12 some of the looks that you've seen reflect that we are just piloting, developing
13 this activity. And the premise of your question about the difficulty of the
14 forecast the further you look out are certainly true. Again, I think Mike
15 summed it up very well.

16 I don't even know the reaches for the five-year forecast, they
17 help me inform what types of work I'll need to do and what skills I'll need to be
18 able to do that work. And so we think even within the uncertainty, the forecast
19 will be beneficial for the activity.

20 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Great, let me just ask one last
21 thing on. At prior meetings, we've talked about this streamlined workforce
22 planning tool that the staff has been developing to keep track of the
23 competencies and skills of NRC's employees.

24 Is that this skills inventory tool that you refer to, Jennifer?
25 Or is that a different -- I'm trying to keep track of all the tools now. Is that the
26 same tool, or is that a different tool?

1 MS. GOLDER: There are a lot of tools.

2 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Okay.

3 MS. GOLDER: The skills inventory tool is the one I think
4 that we're talking about. And that would identify the competencies associated
5 with different roles that are out there. And so it's not just going to be an
6 inventory of any skill out there, it's specific to the roles that we have in the
7 Agency.

8 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Okay, and how's that coming
9 along, the development of that?

10 MS. GOLDER: So we have developed the infrastructure
11 for it. And we are using the information from the three pilot offices from the
12 job analyses of the core positions to feed that information.

13 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Okay.

14 MS. GOLDER: And so one of the things that I wanted to
15 mention that we found is that there are very similar competencies between the
16 roles, which I think Cathy touched on. What we're seeing is slightly different
17 definitions or terms.

18 And so one of the things we're trying to do is reconcile, so
19 that we don't have ten different ways to characterize the same thing.
20 Because that will just make it more complicated. So there is some massaging
21 of the information that's occurring right now.

22 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Great, well I think that's going
23 to be a very valuable tool, and it's good to hear that you're at the point where
24 you're kind of working through the nuts and bolts of it. So thanks.

25 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you. Commissioner
26 Burns.

1 COMMISSIONER BURNS: Thanks again for everyone's
2 presentations. I may come back to the strategic workforce plan in a minute.
3 But just to acknowledge, one thing I want to acknowledge is in terms of our,
4 you know, advisory committees and also the cultural events we put on, well, I
5 don't think I acknowledged it in last year.

6 But they actually helped the projection in terms of our own
7 sort of gratitude by one of our sort of peer regulators, in terms of a trip I did to
8 India last year. Because they were very pleased that we had a Divali
9 celebration. And one of the meetings I had over there put up the big picture
10 that we had from our website on that.

11 So let's not discount the cultural events we have, which are
12 great celebrations. Just that was probably an unusual one in terms of an
13 acknowledgment of what we were doing as an Agency, trying to come
14 together. And the folks were very impressed during that trip.

15 A couple things. I want to come back to strategic workforce
16 planning and the competency, because I think Commissioner Baran's
17 discussion toward the end got to the thing, got to the point that I would have,
18 is that what are we doing.

19 I hope part of what, and I think what I've heard from Jennifer
20 and others during this, what one of the cautions I have is, in fact building the
21 building machine that is overly complex and basically, you know, why the heck
22 would I want to use it as a supervisor. Because, and it also, part of it, and it
23 seems to me, because we're operating at different levels.

24 At one level, I think Jennifer at one point was describing
25 where you have, you're a supervisor, you have a vacancy, and then, and here
26 you might have to help me along. Is your, you have a vacancy and you're

1 trying to understand, well, what kind of, what do I need to fill that vacancy?

2 Well, having been on the other side of the table, and sort of
3 say, if I have certain vacancies, I know I need a contract. So I need a
4 government contracts lawyer. Or I need somebody who's associated with
5 appropriations.

6 I don't, in a sense there's not a lot of work for me to do to
7 understand that. What I might need to know is how would I, and this goes to,
8 I think, some comments that Cathy and Maureen had made, how to, you know,
9 if I don't want somebody -- I want somebody who might have some skill or
10 ability to move into other positions, other than just doing the government
11 contracts work.

12 In fact, in OGC, that's exactly what happened with one of
13 our senior contracts, he was brought in as senior contracts lawyer. And Ed
14 Williamson, who's now overseeing licensing-type matters. So I've got that at
15 the supervisory level, I have the supervisory level. Then I have, I'm trying to
16 project out, as Maureen and Mike described about trying to go beyond what
17 the critique was of the two years.

18 So what I'm trying to understand, how are you coming into
19 assessment of whether I've got this to get me what I need without driving, you
20 know, excessive complexity, that basically I think you lose hearts and minds,
21 quite honestly, as you implement it. So let me pose it that way, and any of
22 you can sort of answer it.

23 MS. GOLDBER: So throughout the pilot, one of the things
24 that we are considering at every step of the way is how we can make this as
25 simple as possible, using what we've already created in the Agency without
26 adding more complexity. Because we do, we all recognize, and we have a

1 lot of discussion about how, if we make it too burdensome or too bureaucratic,
2 too complex, it will fall under its own weight, or it just won't be used.

3 And so we are trying to build on what we already have in
4 this Agency. And we're trying to simplify as much as possible so that -- and
5 we're also trying to define how it would be used at the Agency level or business
6 line, office level, supervisor level, the staff level. And it's a work in progress.
7 We're still developing.

8 But it's something we're mindful of, and it concerns us.
9 Because we don't want to build something that is going to not be used. So
10 we're trying to be very simple about it, we're trying to use what's already out
11 that. And even the things that are already out there we're trying to simplify
12 further and capitalize on that. Cathy, Maureen?

13 MS. WYLIE: So using a specific example, the 560 series,
14 our budget analysts. But there is diversity, not just level, but budget
15 formulation analysts have different kinds of skills than budget execution
16 analysts.

17 But what we've tried to do is reduce the desire to customize,
18 right. So budget formulation of a technical type of organization, budget
19 execution and of corporate support. No, no, no, these skills are usable on
20 any type of formulation.

21 So it helps us that we have what the CFO council has
22 developed, which is extremely robust, which you could also read as perhaps
23 too complicated, because it's based on work that was done by many other
24 Federal Agencies, including the military services, which have very well
25 developed controllership programs, as an example.

26 So we're trying to cherry-pick out of that the things that work

1 for us and keep to the keep it simple mantra.

2 COMMISSIONER BURNS: Okay, and one of the things I'd
3 say, and maybe Mike alluded to this, Mike Weber alluded to this. In terms of,
4 I understand on the forecasting that we don't know exactly what our budget
5 will be in five years, we don't exactly know what the scope of regulation in
6 terms of the number of licensees, etc., etc. But is there a certain amount of
7 what I call scenario planning that goes into that?

8 You know, like for example, Mike's example on advanced
9 reactor work is I think a good example. You know, you got all this churn and,
10 you know, folks saying, oh, we're going to do it, going to do it, going to do it.
11 Are you looking at, for example, if we get it, we may get, you know, like a high
12 side versus a low or medium side?

13 The same way on, I think, and I realize it's difficult. But the
14 same with say, operating reactors, or things like that. So how does that feed
15 into that, in terms of that's this high level view, the 50,000 or 25,000 foot view
16 of what you're going to need from a strategic workforce implementation?

17 MR. WEBER: And I'll try and answer that. Again, we're
18 still developing the key aspects of the program and how they're tied together.
19 But for example, the accident-tolerant fuels is an example of a new
20 technology, a new demand, an increase in demand, a need for us to have
21 skills, not just ability to look at neutrons and do criticality analysis, but to have
22 advanced materials understanding and be able to draw those kinds of folks in.

23 So a part of the challenge will be for us to look at not only
24 what we need, but when we'll need it so that we can identify the skills and
25 program people to be able to either develop those skills that are on staff or us
26 to be able to hire those skills in. So there is a scenario-driven aspect of the

1 process.

2 COMMISSIONER BURNS: Okay, thanks, Mike. Pam, I
3 want to express my appreciation, the Office of Small Business and Civil
4 Rights, for the work you do. I appreciate also the statistical analysis on the
5 complaint aspect. I agree with you, I think it's, you know, in tough times, you
6 know, that's, sometimes we're going to get more complaints, and that seems
7 to be managed.

8 And I think your office in terms of your engagement with folk.
9 And also I think the work of the Agency as a whole trying to be true to its values
10 really helps, so I want to express my appreciation to you and your staff for the
11 work on that.

12 Maureen, an interesting thing on FEVS, you mentioned in
13 terms of the participation rate. I don't know if you, did you compare your
14 participation rate against the government-wide average?

15 MS. WYLIE: So I'm still 14% above the government
16 average.

17 COMMISSIONER BURNS: Yeah, I was going to say.
18 And I know, I think I read something in Government Executive or whatever, I
19 mean, this is the survey fatigue. And I will be the first one, not that I get to do
20 the survey anymore. I'm not allowed, but you know what I mean.

21 You know, every time I buy something on the internet, well
22 how was your experience, and how was it to this, and you know like that.
23 Would you like to take a survey? Or the NRC website, when I access
24 remotely, would you like to take a survey on. No, I just want the information,
25 darn it.

26 So I know that there's, all kidding aside, there is, I know I

1 had seen something that I think OPM, and I don't know if you, anybody, has
2 any insights whether OPM's looking at that. But the notion now, the survey,
3 you know, every year. And I know, all due respect to our IG survey, which
4 actually I think in some ways, you know, for us is often even more valuable
5 because of some of the focus it does.

6 Not that we're doing it every month, it's once a year, but
7 even so, in context. Anyway, I've vented on surveys, but it has nothing to do
8 with FEVS.

9 MS. WYLIE: We did recognize it was just a really bad time
10 for us.

11 COMMISSIONER BURNS: Yeah.

12 MS. WYLIE: I think there is some survey fatigue. This
13 one does, anytime you have an 86-questions survey, or 89 now with some of
14 the optional questions, it is going to try people's souls a little bit. I did go
15 around and ask people personally to do it. I found that helped a little bit at
16 the end. But you know some of them said, I'm doing the nine things you
17 already asked me to do. So it's very hard to argue with them.

18 COMMISSIONER BURNS: No, I know, having been in a
19 position, you're encouraging your staff to do it as best we can do. And I
20 mean, I do encourage people, don't get me wrong. There is a, I think a value
21 to the surveys. But you know, I also understand.

22 And statistically, you know, I mean, I will be the first to admit
23 I am not a statistical expert or would not presume to be one. But statistically,
24 we still have, as you noted, a fairly high participation rate. And I think that
25 does help give insight and give credence to outcomes.

26 But I also compliment you for looking at not only what came

1 in but what wasn't there and what does that mean, and the thinking through it.
2 So I appreciate that. Thank you, Chairman.

3 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Well, thank you all again. I think
4 many of us feel our colleagues' survey fatigue. But you know what I find
5 intriguing is, and I've principally seen these in other countries, it's those little
6 podiums with a button, and there's like a happy face, a neutral face, and a sad
7 face.

8 And it was like, how did you find the cleanliness of this
9 restroom, you know. And on your way out, you're supposed to touch it.
10 Well, I guess there's some hygiene issues there if you touch a button.

11 COMMISSIONER BURNS: Yeah, yeah, I do those. And
12 at Heathrow, they always get a frowny face. I hate that airport.

13 (Laughter.)

14 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Now, somebody's in a venting
15 mood today, so maybe I should. But this notion of how much effort it takes
16 and how willing you are I think is the point. I think if we can work to maybe
17 have a 50-question survey and not an 89 questions. Those are real issues
18 because people have other important things that we're asking them to do in
19 addition to that.

20 But I do thank you all for you presentations. The final
21 component of our discussion today, I will now invite Maria Schwartz, the
22 Executive Vice-President of the National Treasury Employees Union, the
23 Chapter here 208 here at NRC, to please come to the podium and present
24 remarks. Maria.

25 MS. SCHWARZ: Good morning, Chairman Svinicki,
26 Commissioners Baran and Burns, and Mr. Johnson, and my bargaining unit

1 colleagues. As the Executive Vice-President of NTEU Chapter 208, I'm
2 pleased to be able to provide the union's comments this morning.

3 Joining me today is our chapter president, Sheryl Burrows,
4 and several members of our union team, including several stewards and
5 officers on the bridge line.

6 NTEU, as most of you know, is the sole representative of
7 our bargaining unit employees. So as the number of topics discussed this
8 morning illustrates, so much has happened at the NRC since the last EEO
9 briefing. Most significantly, the Agency was able to avoid a RIF. NTEU
10 worked diligently with the Agency to ensure that not one NRC employee was
11 involuntarily removed.

12 NTEU's efforts started in 2015, when we bargained with the
13 Agency for a very robust Article 49 in our collective bargaining agreement
14 addressing reductions in force. This article requires the Agency to establish
15 a working group as soon as there was even the possibility of a RIF.

16 The working group started meeting last year. Its focus was
17 to develop ways to avoid a RIF. I'm happy to say that both NTEU and the
18 Agency worked tirelessly on this effort, the outcome of which is particularly
19 important in terms of this briefing this morning, since so many of the potentially
20 impacted employees belong to one or more of the EEO classes protected
21 under Title VII.

22 We should celebrate the success, but even as we celebrate,
23 our leaders must not lose sight of the stress that's placed on so many
24 employees in the corporate support offices, and really on employees
25 throughout the Agency.

26 Impacted employees were asked to make difficult decisions.

1 Many employees commented to NTEU officers and stewards that this process
2 made them question their value as NRC employees. Let's hope that even
3 the possibility of a RIF never occurs again.

4 And on a positive note, some of the initiatives that have
5 been taken under Project Aim, such as the re-prioritization of work,
6 competency modeling, and ongoing efforts to develop a truly strategic
7 workforce plan that focuses not only on the current workforce, but keeps an
8 eye on some of the uncertainties of future work, should to eliminate the
9 possibility of any future RIF. NTEU applauds this use of lessons learned.

10 So now I'm going to talk about the FEVS scores, you just
11 led me into it. So despite much of the turmoil our employees have been
12 working under, the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey scores went up a little
13 this years. NTEU would like to include this as a success too, but to be honest,
14 we find it a little puzzling.

15 For the last several years, through several Chairmen and
16 EDOs, NTEU has been following the FEVS scores to understands trends.
17 And based on these trends, NTEU has repeatedly asked our senior leaders to
18 ensure that Agency and office processes and procedures are available; that
19 employees understand what they're being asked to do; and that resources,
20 including training, are provided. Our bargaining unit employees need these
21 resources to engage their work most effectively.

22 Thus, while I would like to call the overall rise in the FEVS
23 score a success as well, we are not sure necessarily that this is the case.

24 As things perhaps start to settle down after a very
25 tumultuous couple of years, NTEU's ask at this time for senior leaders is to
26 consider the number of very large differences between the number of positive

1 responses of non-supervisory employees as compared to the number of
2 positive responses of senior leaders.

3 There are large differences in responses to several
4 questions, including those involving policies and procedures, opportunities to
5 get a better job, and opportunities to get training. I have chosen one very
6 inclusive question, Question 69, as an example. It asks: Considering
7 everything, how satisfied are you with your job?

8 The number of positive responses from non-supervisory
9 employees was 71.6%, which appears to be a pretty good score. And
10 actually, it is a pretty good score, as compared to some other Agencies.

11 The troubling issue for NTEU is that the number of positive
12 responses for senior leaders was 97.5 percent, almost perfection. There may
13 be several plausible reasons for this. One that I have often heard is that
14 senior leaders have a broader view of what is occurring at the NRC.

15 There is another possibility, however, that should be
16 considered, and that is that senior leaders have a different view than non-
17 supervisory employees on many of the issues that our bargaining unit
18 employees are facing.

19 If that is the case, NTEU believes that this is, to use the
20 vernacular, a big challenge. Because at its core, it indicates the vision of
21 senior leaders is different than the vision non-supervisory employees have
22 about many things involving the NRC.

23 This in turn can create mixed messages and lessen the
24 effectiveness of other communications, as well as the Agency initiatives we
25 heard discussed this morning.

26 Success demands that there is a common vision of the

1 goals to be achieved, how those goals will be achieved. And to understand
2 this better, perhaps senior leaders should start talking with and listening more
3 to non-supervisory employees.

4 While NTEU and the Advisory Committees work as conduits
5 for these voices, this does not take the place of the one-on-one activity.
6 Hearing about OCFO's initiatives in this regard, it sounds like they have some
7 ideas worth stealing.

8 NTEU believes the differences between the positive
9 responses of senior leaders versus the positive responses of non-supervisory
10 employees deserves further consideration, and that the outcome of this
11 analysis could provide ways to strengthen the NRC's organizational health
12 and vitality. As a questioning organization, we should always strive to create
13 and use lessons learned to develop ways to continually improve.

14 Thank you for the opportunity to bring NTEU's concern to
15 your attention this morning. NTEU looks forward to working with you for the
16 benefit of our bargaining unit employees, who deserve nothing less.

17 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you very much, Maria, for
18 those remarks. If my colleagues have nothing further, again, I thank
19 everyone, and we are adjourned.

20 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record
21 at 11:41 a.m.)

22